Controlling the Mob

Social Media in Emergency Management and Disaster Response

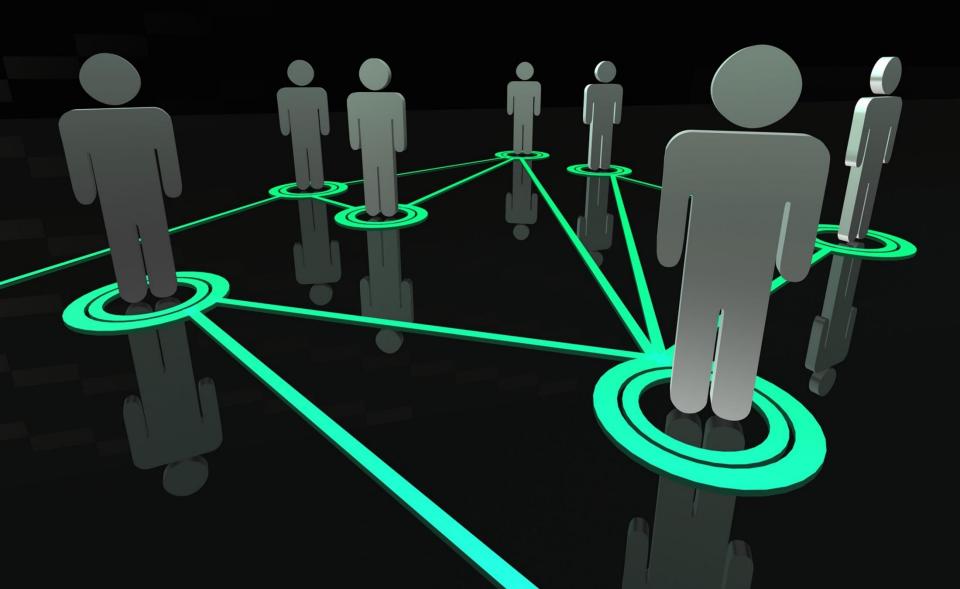**Ron Leix**

February 3, 2015

Agenda

- What is social media?

- How does the public use it?

- How should EM use it?
  - Response and Recovery

- Case studies.

- The Mob Mentality.

- Final thoughts.

Social Media is a term for the tools and platforms people use to publish, converse and share content online.

1: NETWORKING

2: COLLABORATION

3: CUSTOMER SERVICE

4: PUBLIC RELATIONS

What kinds of social media do you use?

The Big Three

- **Facebook** – Social network. Good for collaborating, networking and crowdsourcing.

- **Twitter** – Microblogging. Updates can be posted during emergencies and disasters.

- **YouTube** – Video and social networking. Enables compelling video content and feedback.

The Big Three

- Most common social media outlets.
- Media scours these outlets for story leads and ideas.
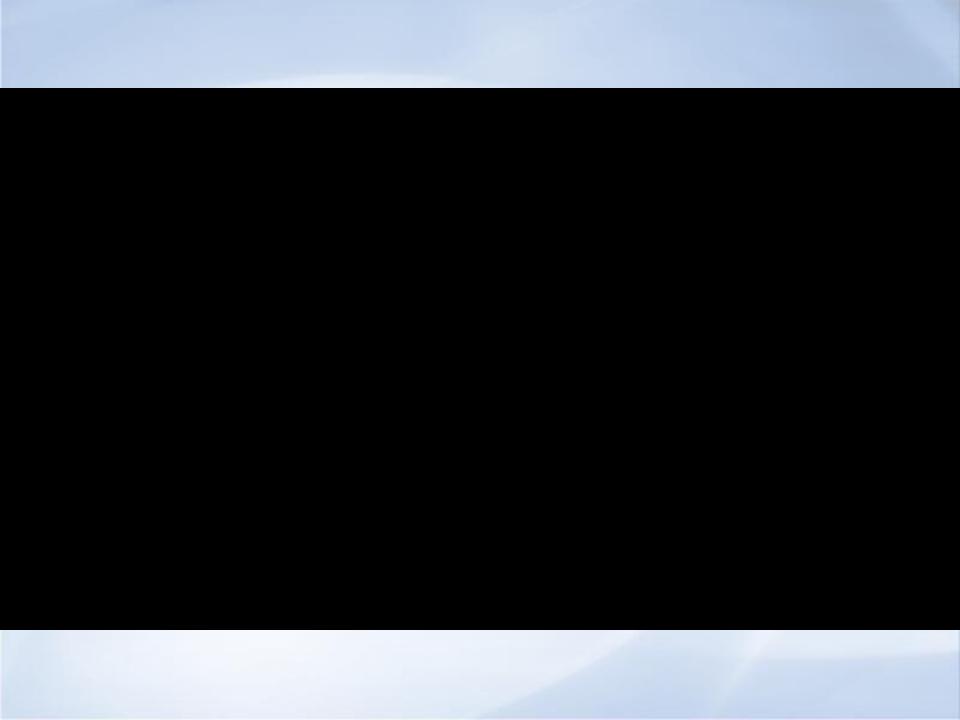- Return on investment high.

Do you get your news and information from social media?

Social Media and the News

- Pew Research: Roughly 64% of U.S. adults use Facebook.
  - Half of those users get news there – 30% of population.
  - YouTube is next biggest social news pathway – 10 % of population gets news from there.
  - Twitter? 8% of users.
  - Reddit? 3% of users, with 60%+ news discussion

Emergency Response

What are the benefits of the public using social media during a disaster?

What are the drawbacks of the public using social media during a disaster?

Emergency Response

- Today government agencies and first responders are incorporating social media into communications play.

- But why?

During the Response

- Gives agencies a faster means to disseminate updated information to the public.

- Enables agencies to listen and respond to concerns from the public, establishing trust and credibility

- Transparency.

During the Response

- Provides messages on how people can avoid risk or harm, like public awareness campaigns.

- Enables agencies to see pictures, video and information the public posts during disasters or emergencies.

- Creates a wider scope and fuller understanding of the event for emergency responders.

Online news is the **3rd** most popular source for emergency info.

It's BEST to **call 9-1-1**

HOW AMERICANS USE SOCIAL TOOLS IN EMERGENCIES

18% use FB to get information about emergencies.

24% would use social tools to tell others they're safe.

"I'm safe"

30% in metro areas would sign up for alerts.

20% in non-metro areas would sign up for alerts.

80% expect emergency responders to monitor social sites.

1 in 5 would try an online channel to get help if unable to reach EMS.

1 in 5 experienced an emergency posted something about it on a social site.

More than **1/3** expect help to arrive within 1 hour of posting need to social site.

American Red Cross

H21050

Disaster Survivor Benefits

- People use social media during disaster to communicate with others.

- Contact family members to make sure they are safe.

- People can contact emergency responders through social media if they have no other method.

Disaster Survivor Benefits

- Retrieve emergency information online through Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- Allows people to post pictures, video and new information during a disaster.

Disaster Recovery

- Social media can be used to inform citizens about aid and assistance available.

  - Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARCs)

  - Federal Assistance (If applicable.)

  - Nonprofit organizations

  - Available options for short-term and long-term recovery.

Crisis Communicator: Twitter

- Twitter is one of the most used social media outlets for crisis communications.

- Enables quick updates to be public.

- Tweets act like a news release.

Crisis Communicator: Twitter

- Hashtags can be utilized on various social media outlets, providing even more situational awareness to public and government agencies.

- Media scours Twitter for stories and will use content when it counts.

- Public information officers can gain valuable situational awareness on Twitter.

Social Media Drawbacks

- Social media hypes up a situation quickly. (Pro and Con)

- Resources **MUST** be dedicated to media monitoring for a smallest of disasters.

- Speculation spreads and makes its way to traditional media quickly.

Hurricane Katrina

- Aug. 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast.

- 100-140 mph winds stretched across 400 miles.

- Hundreds of thousands of people in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi were displaced from their homes
  - Some trapped for days/weeks after the storm

Hurricane Katrina

- Lack of communication with the disaster survivors was a critical issue
- How would Katrina been different if social media was using during the disaster response?

CASE STUDY:
Hurricane Sandy

Hurricane Sandy

- October 29, 2012, Hurricane Sandy impacted the eastern United States.

- Destroyed hundreds of thousands of homes

- Millions lost power.

- Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) was used for assistance from other states.

Hurricane Sandy
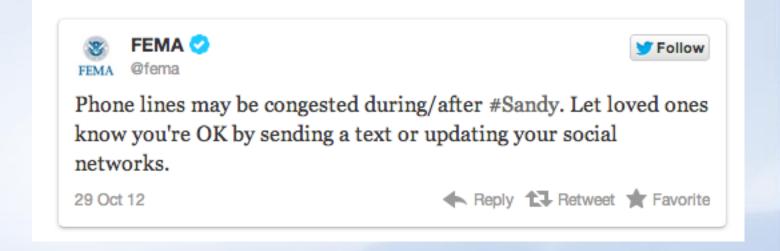
- Marked a shift in use of social media in disasters.

- Government agencies, first responders and nonprofits used Twitter and Facebook to push out information about response and recovery efforts.

Hurricane Sandy

American Red Cross ✔
@RedCross
Follow

Follow your local @redcross chapter for more specific info on #Sandy response the next few days. twitter.com/redcross/local

← Reply ⥂ Retweet ★ Favorite

231 RETWEETS   27 FAVORITES

1:42 PM - 27 Oct 12 · Embed this Tweet

NJ.com
@njdotcom
Follow

We continue to get a lot of power questions. Use #njpower hash tag to report on situations to help others get info nj-ne.ws/YeaAT4

← Reply ⥂ Retweet ★ Favorite ••• More

FEMA ✔
@fema
Follow

Phone lines may be congested during/after #Sandy. Let loved ones know you're OK by sending a text or updating your social networks.

29 Oct 12

← Reply ⥂ Retweet ★ Favorite

Hurricane Sandy

Hurricane Sandy

CASE STUDY:
November Wind Storm

November Wind Storm

- On Nov. 17, 2013, a severe wind storm knocked out power to 775,000 customers statewide.

- Worst service interruption since June 2008.

- Took several days for utility companies to restore services.

November Wind Storm
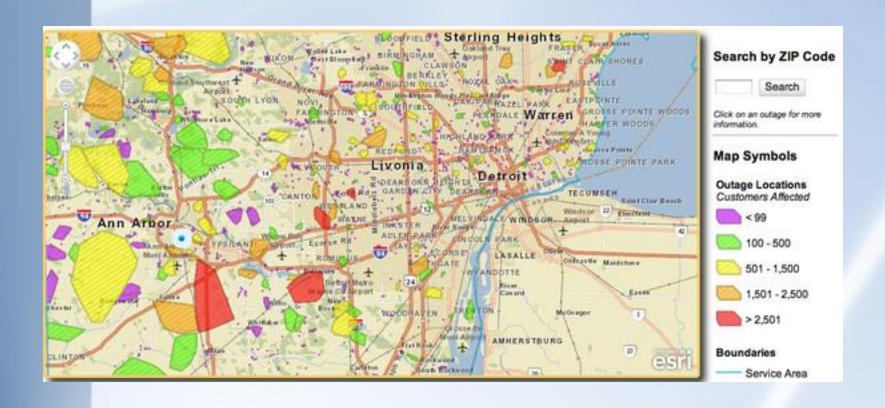
- Utility companies interacted with customers, providing links to real-time outage maps.

- Red Cross provided shelter updates.

- MSP/EMHSD provided power outage tips before, during and after the incident.

November Wind Storm

November Wind Storm

CASE STUDY:
Southeast Michigan Flooding Disaster

Southeast Michigan Flooding

- On Aug. 11, 2014, severe storms and torrential rain impacted city of Detroit and Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties.

- Roughly $300 million in federal and state disaster assistance provided.
  - Second largest disaster award in recent Michigan history.

Southeast Michigan Flooding

- State Emergency Operations Center activated on Aug. 11, 2014.

- Governor declared a "State of Disaster" on Aug. 13, 2014.

- President declared a major disaster on Sept. 25 for:

  - Individual Assistance (People)

  - Public Assistance (Public Infastructure)

  - Hazard Mitigation (Statewide)

Southeast Michigan Flooding

- MSP/EMHSD used Twitter and Facebook to inform citizens and media during response and recovery stages of the disaster.

- Topics?

  - Flooded roads; phone numbers for assistance; what to do if you have flood damage; disaster declaration process; and disaster aid application info.

Southeast Michigan Flooding

Southeast Michigan Flooding

MichEMHS
@MichEMHS

Follow

Joint Preliminary Assessment Teams are in Southeast Michigan today looking at public damages, like roads, schools and other infrastructure.

8:24 AM - 5 Sep 2014

MichEMHS
@MichEMHS

Follow

Live in Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties? You can apply for disaster aid online at disasterassistance.gov or by calling 1-800-621-3362.

10:45 AM - 26 Sep 2014

The Mob Mentality of Social Media

The Mob Mentality

Mob Mentality (Herd Mentality) – Describes how people are influenced by their peers to adopt certain behaviors, follow trends...

The Mob Mentality

- Anything you say can be twisted and used as criticism against you by others.

- Be aware at all times of the messages you are posting to the public.

- Hot-topic issues and misinformation can come from nowhere.

CASE STUDY:
Data Extraction Devices

Data Extraction Devices

- **A convergence and storm of all social media channels hit the MSP with a situation involving DEDs.**

- April 13, 2011: ACLU releases a press release about its desire to receive information about the MSP's use of DEDs.

Data Extraction Devices

ACLU
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION of MICHIGAN

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Home » ACLU Seeks Records about State Police Searches of Cellphones

ACLU Seeks Records about State Police Searches of Cellphones

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 13, 2011

DETROIT – The American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan urged the Michigan State Police (MSP) today to release information regarding the use of portable devices which can be used to secretly extract personal information from cell phones during routine stops.

For nearly three years, the ACLU has repeatedly asked for this information through dozens of Freedom of Information Act requests, but to date it has not been provided.

Read our letter to the Michigan State Police.

"Transparency and government accountability are the bedrocks of our democracy," said Mark P. Fancher, ACLU of Michigan Racial Justice Project staff attorney. "Through these many requests for information we have tried to establish whether these devices are being used legally. It's telling that Michigan State Police would rather play this stalling game than respect the public's right to know."

Several years ago, MSP acquired portable devices that have the potential to quickly download data from cell phones without the owner of the cellphone knowing.

The ACLU of Michigan expressed concern about the possible constitutional implications of using these devices to conduct suspicionless searches without consent or a search warrant.

In August 2008, the ACLU of Michigan filed its first FOIA request to acquire records, reports and logs of actual use.

Documents provided in response confirmed the existence of these devices

I support the ACLU because...

"I realize the importance of being a part of an organization that is dedicated locally and nationally to protecting and preserving the rights and civil liberties of all persons in our country, regardless of race, gender, or ethnicity."

– Millie Hall,
President, Coalition of Labor Union Women Detroit

⊕ More

Know the Issues
> See a full list of issues

Join the ACLU
Help fight for your rights. Become a card-carrying ACLU of Michigan member.
> Join now!

Take Action
Join thousands of activists across the state in speaking out.
> I'm ready to take action!

Renew
Keep fighting for your rights.
> Renew your membership!

Data Extraction Devices

- Because the ACLU's Freedom of Information Request was so broad, the cost and resources to acquire the information totaled more than $540,000.

- ACLU: "Several years ago, MSP acquired portable devices that have the potential to quickly download data from cell phones without the owner of the cell phone knowing."

Data Extraction Devices

- **Blogosphere: "Michigan State Police is downloading mobile phone data during 'routine' traffic stops."**

- This is false. Limited use of DEDs; MSP either seeks consent or a warrant.

Data Extraction Devices

- Many radio hosts, conspiracy theorists, bloggers and privacy advocates wrote pieces from this blogosphere interpretation.

- Objective journalism was nowhere to be found. Mainstream media ran with story.

- Rumors were spreading rapidly.

Data Extraction Devices

Data Extraction Devices

- **To combat the rumors, the Michigan State Police went to Twitter and Facebook.**

- Twitter was the speaking venue for the bloggers. Bloggers like to promote and engage with an audience via Twitter.

Data Extraction Devices

- We released an official statement and took to Twitter to ensure the statement was seen.

- We directly corrected those who tweeted that MSP harvested mobile phone data during "routine" traffic stops.

Data Extraction Devices

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

Use of Cell Phone Data Extraction Devices
April 20, 2011

LANSING. Recent news coverage prompted by a press release issued by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has brought speculation and caused inaccurate information to be reported about data extraction devices (DEDs) owned by the Michigan State Police (MSP).

To be clear, there have not been any allegations of wrongdoing by the MSP in the use of DEDs.

The MSP only uses the DEDs if a search warrant is obtained or if the person possessing the mobile device gives consent. The department's internal directive is that the DEDs only be used by MSP specialty teams on criminal cases, such as crimes against children.

The DEDs are not being used to extract citizens' personal information during routine traffic stops.

The MSP does not possess DEDs that can extract data without the officer actually possessing the owner's mobile device. The DEDs utilized by the MSP cannot obtain information from mobile devices without the mobile device owner knowing.

Data extraction devices are commercially available and are routinely utilized by mobile communication device vendors nationwide to transmit data from one device to another when customers upgrade their mobile devices.

These DEDs have been adapted for law enforcement use due to the ever-increasing use of mobile communication devices by criminals to further their criminal activity and have become a powerful investigative tool used to obtain critical information from criminals.

Since 2008, the MSP has worked with the ACLU to narrow the focus, and thus reducing the cost, of its

Data Extraction Devices

- **The blogosphere shifted gears.**

- Bloggers started to blog, tweet and retweet about the MSP's official statement. Mainstream media then reported our statement.

- The viewpoint shifted as fast as it started.

Data Extraction Devices

- Some bloggers were shocked to see the MSP was on Twitter.

- If the MSP was not on Twitter, then the rumors could have spread. We were there to engage and address questions.

- We were present for the conversation.

Data Extraction Devices

- A western Michigan MSP post demonstrated a DED to a local news station.

- The piece displayed how cumbersome it was to use.

- Our followers thanked us for proving MSP isn't taking mobile phone date during every traffic stop.

Can you name a recent situation where social media spread inaccurate information?

Final Thoughts

Final Thoughts

- Be proactive with social media before, during and after a disaster.

- Conduct regular media monitoring reports that log positive, negatives and misinformation.

- Engage, but engage carefully.
  - Social media is a two-way street.

- Constantly changing.

A PROUD tradition of SERVICE, through EXCELLENCE, INTEGRITY, AND COURTESY